

Please amend the claims as follows.

D²

4. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 14, wherein the mutator gene is one or more mutator genes selected from the group consisting of dnaQ, dnaE, mutL, mutS, mutH, uvrD and dam.

D³

6. (Twice Amended) The method according to claim 14, wherein the certain condition for causing the defect in the mutation repair mechanism is a certain temperature.

D⁴

9. (Thrice Amended) A mutant of a cell, said mutant comprising a mutation in its genomic DNA introduced by any one of the methods according to claim 14, 4 or 6.

Please add the following new claims.

14. A method for establishing a mutant cell, which method comprises:

(a) introducing a mutation into the genomic DNA of a cell under a certain condition, wherein said cell comprises a mutator gene which causes a defect in the mutation repair mechanism of said cell under said certain condition;

(b) selecting a mutant cell tolerant to a stress condition without introduction of a mutation; and

(c) repeating said step (a) and said step (b) to develop tolerance of said mutant cell to said stress condition, wherein the repeating of said step (b) a second time and thereafter are carried out under a higher stress condition than in said step (b) therebefore, and wherein the

repeating of said step (a) a second time and thereafter are carried out under the same stress condition as that in said step (b) immediately therebefore.

15. The method according to claim 14, wherein the cell is a *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain having a temperature-sensitive mutator gene dnaQ.

16. The method according to claim 14, wherein the stress condition is the presence of an antibiotic drug.

17. The method according to claim 14, wherein the stress condition is an alkaline condition.

18. A mutant of a *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 15 or 16, which grows in the presence of 6,000 µg/ml of ampicillin.

19. A mutant of a *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 15 or 16, which grows in the presence of 500 µg/ml of ofloxacin.

20. A mutant of a *Escherichia coli* dnaQ49 strain established by the method according to claim 15 or 16, which grows in the presence of 7,000 µg/ml of nalidixic acid.